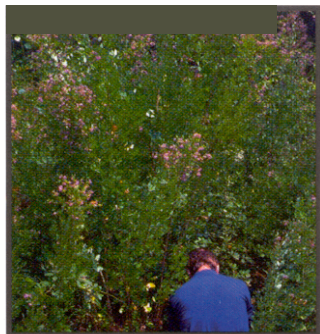


## Lespedeza Bicolor *Lespedeza bicolor*



Lespedeza bicolor-flowering



Lespedeza bicolor-back & front of leaves



Lespedeza bicolor-flower

**Plant:** Perennial leguminous shrub, ascending or arching, branched, 1-3 m (3-10 ft) tall, from a woody rootcrown.

**Stem:** Ascending stems. 0.5-2 cm (3/16-3/4 in) in diameter, *appressed* hairs to hairless, often gray-green.

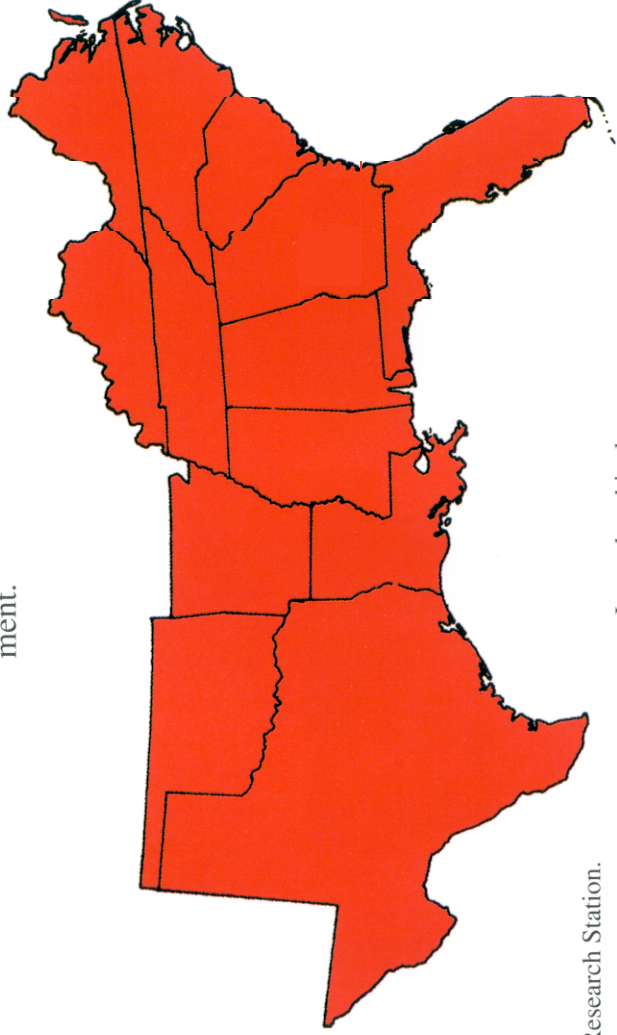
**Leaves:** Alternate, 3-leaflet leaves, petioles 2-4 cm (3/4-1 1/2 in), leaflets elliptic to ovate, 2-5 cm (3/4-2 in) long and 1-3 cm (1/2-1 1/4 in) wide, lower surface lighter green. *Stipules* narrowly linear, 1-8 mm (1/16-5/16 in) long.

**Flowers:** June-September. Clusters (*racemes*) of 5-15 well-spaced flowers from upper leaf axils and exceeding the upper leaves, 10-40 cm (4-16 in) long with clusters subtended by an ovate bract, 0.5-1.5 mm (1/64-1/16 in) long. Petals rosy purple and white (bicolored), 8-11 mm (5/16-7/16 in) long. *Calyx* sparsely to very hairy, lobes 2.5-4.5 mm (1/8-1/4 in) long with lower lobe 1 mm (1/16 in) longer.

**Fruit and Seeds:** August to November. Flat leguminous pod, broadly elliptic, 6-X mm (1/4-5/16 in) long, with densely *appressed* hairs.

**Range:** Throughout the Southeast.

**Ecology:** Nitrogen fixer. Planted for wildlife food and soil improvement. An exotic invader of forests that will reproduce and spread even under a medium to dense overstory. Burning encourages encroachment.



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(Added photo by Ted Bodner)

*Lespedeza bicolor*